Building Community Wealth: Tools for Changing the Economic Game

Workshop on Equitable Development: Tools & Strategies for Making a Visible Difference in Communities
US EPA Office of Environmental Justice
14th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth conference

Panel: Deal Makers and Game Changers
Being Responsive to a Market for Equitable Development
Baltimore, Maryland, January 30, 2015
Steve Dubb, Research Director
The Democracy Collaborative
Promoting innovations to rebuild community wealth and enhance vital and equitable local economies

Field Building
To create a “Community Wealth” movement:
- C-W.org
- CWB Roundtable
- Learning/Action Lab
- Policy Development
- Key Partnerships
- Conferences

Research
Build knowledge for the field:
- Reports
- Articles
- Case Studies
- Books
- Metrics & Indicators

Advisory
Develop community wealth building strategies in local communities (with City governments, local philanthropy, anchors):
- Cleveland, OH
- Atlanta, GA
- Washington, DC
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Amarillo, TX
- Jacksonville, FL
- New Orleans, LA

Next System
Expand network of scholars & activists:
- Conferences (Harvard, MIT)
- Commissioned Research
- Next System Book
What is Community Wealth Building?

A new approach to community development that creates economic prosperity by democratizing wealth and ownership. Key principles are:

• Start with values
• Develop productive assets
• Grow values-based enterprises
• Lead with demand
• Strengthen support networks
• Anchor ownership in community
• Keep wealth local
Cleveland, Ohio: Building Wealth via Business Development
Evergreen Cooperatives
3 businesses, 140 employees
Project Funding: Laundry

- $1.5 Million in City of Cleveland Empowerment Zone/HUD 108 Funds
- $750,000 Loan from CDFI
- $1,326,500 from the Evergreen Cooperative Development Fund
- $1,373,500 in New Markets Tax Credits Investments
- $200,000 in City of Cleveland EDA Title IX Working Capital Loan
- $250,000 from local loan fund
- $183,500 in Enterprise Grant
Governance Structure

Evergreen Cooperative Corporation

- Evergreen Cooperative Development Fund
- Evergreen Real Estate Corp.
- Evergreen Business Services
  - EBS Board
    - Co-Op 4
    - Co-Op 5
  - Green City Growers
  - Evergreen Energy Solutions
  - Evergreen Cooperative Laundry
  - Individual Co-op Boards
Community Wealth in Indian Country

Multi-year collaboration with Native American communities in four communities (2 urban, 2 rural)
Key focus: capacity building, strategic direction
Example: Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) – Portland, OR

CDFI

NAYA Enterprises

Nawitka Catering

NAYA Construction

PowWow Prosperity
Identifying Goals and Indicators
Principles of Measurement

• Focus on what anchor institutions can control, not what they cannot

• Set benchmarks

• Establish goals and timelines

• Use policy metrics to assess impact in areas where numerical goals won’t work

• Include metrics that link to improving local economic multipliers

“While in each area there are hundreds of things [to measure], let’s agree on a few key indicators … Perfect data can be the enemy of the good.”

Wim Wiewel
President
Portland State University
Community Roundtable
Jacksonville, Florida: March 2014
Ways to Change the Game

• Establish trust: respect local knowledge
• Co-create: build ecosystems, not just businesses
• Emphasize coaching/relationship building
• Build strong networks: find the expertise you need
• Create opportunities for small group interaction
• Provide space for regular feedback
• Emphasize peer-to-peer learning
• Be aware of cultural communication norms
Thank you!

For more information:
www.community-wealth.org

Steve Dubb
Research Director
Democracy Collaborative
steve@democracymcollaborative.org